DOCUMENT RESUME

ED 208 283 CG 015 453

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TITLE Patterns of Student Stress: A Profile of Teacher Education Students in Their First Year of Tertiary Studies. Report Number 13.
INSTITUTION Nedlands Coll. of Advanced Education (Australia).
PUB DATE Dec 80
NOTE 63p.

EDRS PRICE MF01/PC03 Plus Postage.
DESCRIPTORS *College Environment; *College Freshmen; *Coping; *Education Majors; Foreign Countries; Higher Education; Interpersonal Relationship; Self Concept; *Stress Variables; *Student Adjustment; Student Alienation; Study Habits; Teacher Education
IDENTIFIERS *Australia

ABSTRACT

Stress adaptation research suggests that individuals need not only strategies and skills to solve problems, but also supportive environments in which solutions can be accomplished. A general profile of Australian freshmen education majors was drawn to examine their adjustment to and behaviors in the college environment. Results indicated that 80% of the students were satisfied with their courses. A high degree of correlation was found between degree of satisfaction and commitment to teaching. Although 75% of the students estimated spending less than 20 hours a week on studying, they indicated difficulties in studying effectively. More than 37% indicated attitudes of low self-esteem, while 34% felt alienated from college. The findings indicate that culture shock may be a fact of life at college and that college staff should help first-year students become an integral part of the college by providing opportunities for establishing academic status and developing interpersonal skills and social responsibility. (Author/JAC)

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REPORT NUMBER 13
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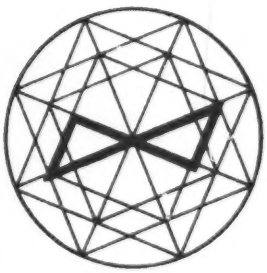
PATTERNS OF STUDENT STRESS



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NEDLANDS COLLEGE of Advanced Education

PATTERNS OF STUDENT STRESS

A PROFILE of TEACHER EDUCATION STUDENTS
in their FIRST YEAR of TERTIARY STUDIES
at NEDLANDS COLLEGE undertaken under the AUSPICES
of the RESEARCH COMMITTEE of NEDLANDS COLLEGE

by MRS. M. KAPLAN

Report Number 13
Date: December 1980

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ABSTRACT

A stress-adaptation perspective (Mechanic, 1978) is used as a backdrop against which to examine the patterns of stress in a tertiary institution.

This perspective maintains that to deal successfully with stress, the individual needs not only the strategies and range of skills to solve problems but a supportive social/emotional environment in which solutions can be accomplished.

Under stress or high emotional arousal, the individual is more likely to perform behaviours, learned previously either through observational learning or through role performance, than to do creative problem solving unless actively encouraged to do so. It is through such a process that the individual is enabled to develop a range of techniques that can be used in appropriate situations. This has important implications for those students enrolled in a Diploma of Teaching course because the role performance is likely to be reminiscent of their school and childhood experiences.

The study attempts to draw a general profile of students in their first year at Nedlands College in terms of their major field studies, satisfaction with course, commitment to teaching, academic achievement, aspects of their study behaviour, the nature and number of recent life events, self esteem and their perceptions of their College experience.

It also suggests the activity of studying itself is to be regarded as more vulnerable to disruption by stress states than most other forms of activity. To be successful as students, individuals need enough attention outside their anxieties to give to their studies.

A profile of students was derived from the questionnaire administered to 237 first year students enrolled in the Diploma of Teaching course. It attempted to detail information about such things as the course undertaken, degree of satisfaction with course and study behaviour. The questionnaire had built into it three independent scales : a schedule of recent life events; a measure of alienation; and a measure of self worth. The analysis of results confines itself to some of the major areas of concern.

The results indicate that up to 80% of the students in their first year are satisfied with their course. There was a high correlation between degree of satisfaction and commitment to teaching.

While 75% of these first year students estimated spending less than twenty hours per week in private study, their qualitative comments indicate they have considerable difficulty in organizing their study time, getting assignments done and studying effectively.

The schedule of recent life events suggests that almost 20% of these students recently experienced six or more stressful life events. The responses indicate that students believe their major stresses to be those associated with their studies, financial hardship and interpersonal relationships.

More than 37% of the students obtained a score on Rosenberg's (1964) measure of self worth that indicated their self esteem was low. The measure of alienation indicated that more than 34% of these students felt alienated at College. These results also indicated that lower self esteem is more likely to be associated with greater feelings of alienation. It seems that for many students, 'culture shock' may be a major fact of life at College.

This may, in part, be due to the 'sense of isolation' in subject departments expressed by many of the students who participated in the survey.

The College experience is intended to provide opportunity for students to feel significant and to contribute to the communal life of the College. The extent to which it does so should be reflected in changes in the student attitudes as the students themselves begin to feel a part of 'the College'.

Lokitz and Sprandel (1976) noted 'not only do students seek validation of their existence from friends, they also need and seek validation of their existence from adults in their new community'.

College staff could assist first year students to become an integral part of the College by actively reaching out to them.

One way in which this could be achieved is to provide early 'feedback' to students to enable them to establish their academic status. Of equal importance, however, is the need for opportunities in which to develop interpersonal skills and social responsibility that enable students to 'move in' on the College experience.

INTRODUCTION

Stress is part of life. It is a natural by-product of all our activities (Selye, 1956, (p299)

To be alive is to be under stress (Hinkle, 1973)

The purpose of this study was to identify some of the sources of stress among students in their first year at College. The analysis of this topic brought together three strands of sociological literature: that involving the nature of stress; that concerned with the distinguishing factors of the student population; and that dealing with the College environment.

This study looked at stress from the stress-adaptation perspective. This perspective differs from both the psycho-analytic theories in which modes of adaptation are labelled 'defense mechanisms' and ego theories which focus on adaptation as a protective psychological process.

The stress-adaptation perspective views people as persons able to work either as individuals or cooperatively to confront challenge. (Mechanic, 1978).

Successful personal adaptation is seen as a pattern of behaviour based on the individual's strategies and skills in dealing with social and environmental demands, personal motivation and the ability to maintain and direct personal energies to meet external rather than internal needs. It is further suggested by Mechanic that this ability will depend as much on the social supports available or absent in the environment as on the psychological resources of the individual.

Numerous studies (Dohrenwend, 1974; Knapp, 1973; Vinokur and Selzer, 1975; Marx, Garrity and Bowers, 1975) have shown that the number of unpleasant life events experienced by an individual may be associated with symptoms of stress.

Ryle (1969) and Long (1970) suggested that the College student population may experience abnormal stresses because the displacement of normal developmental events cannot be resolved in the ways achieved by their non-student peers. For example, there is a tendency for students' relationships with their parents to become locked into the parent/child model of their school days. In addition, students are suspended in a temporary status and insecurity at an age when other social groups enjoy a defined social and professional status. There is also evidence (Gunn, 1970) that stress has an exaggerated effect on study in comparison to other life roles because study is more vulnerable to disruption by stress situations. Stress commonly produces failure in concentration, distractible and obsessional behaviour. Such behaviour in a shop assistant could pass almost unnoticed. In a student it does not and academic work capacity may be distorted.

The questionnaire used in this study was modelled along the lines of that used in a study of student performance at the University of Leeds (McCracken, 1969) except that questions relating to medical history were omitted.

In addition, three other measures were included : a schedule of recent life events adapted from the idea developed by Holmes and Rahe (1967), (Appendix 1, Item 71); a measure of alienation (Burback, 1972 and Cohen, 1974) (Appendix 1, Items 61-69); and, a measure of self worth (Rosenberg, 1964) (Appendix 1, Item 72, i-ix).

AIMS OF THE STUDY

The study tried to provide a general profile of students in their first year at College and to identify some of the basic support systems used by students to adapt to their new situation. It sought to establish an adequate framework from which to explore various dimensions relating to stress.

It therefore attempted:-

1. To isolate the distinguishing social factors of the student population.
2. To examine behaviour specific to students.
3. To identify some of the more subtle indicators of stress.
4. To focus the attention of College personnel on areas of student need.

METHOD

A questionnaire (Appendix 1) was administered between 9 October, 1979 and 16 October, 1979 during class periods to 237 first year students* enrolled in the Diploma of Teaching course at Nedlands College of Advanced Education. The questionnaire comprised 106 questions that sought information in relation to:-

(a) basic support systems - cultural, environmental, family and social;
(b) amount of life change precipitated by entry to College;
(c) motivation i.e. extent and cost of his commitment; and,
(d) perception of College life, self esteem and recent life events.

ANALYSIS OF DATA

A vast amount of information could have been extracted from responses to the questionnaire. No attempt was made to deal with the entire range of available information. The initial analysis was confined to some of the major areas where the impact and management of stress could be identified best. Descriptive statistics only were used in analysing the results.

RESULTS

THE NATURE OF STUDENTS RECENT LIFE EVENTS

Students have many developmental experiences in common with non students of their age group.

In this study, students were asked to complete a schedule of recent life experiences in the belief that this would highlight the areas perceived to be of greatest concern to students. There were eleven fixed categories of events and an additional open category to which students were able to respond. Table 1 provides a summary of the responses given. The responses indicate that events associated with concern over studies (65%), financial hardship (59%), and, interpersonal relationships (43%) were the ones that most frequently affected students' lives.

*Students with Art as their major teaching field were not available during the period the questionnaire was administered and have not been included in the study.

Table 1

Recent Life Events

Category of Events	Number of Students Sharing the Experience*	Percentage
Difficulties in staff/peer group interaction	96	43%
Trouble with personal relationships	95	43%
Failure in course	31	14%
Health problems (self)	66	30%
Health problems (family)	48	22%
Loss of employment	18	8%
Financial hardships	130	59%
Loss/separation	42	19%
Frequent family arguments	51	23%
Concern over studies	144	65%
Worry about social life	85	39%
Other	21	10%
None of these things	16	7%

*As students were invited to nominate more than one category percentages shown total more than 100%.

Aspects of study behaviour

Three aspects of study behaviour were investigated:-

- the amount of time per week spent in study related activity;
- the quality of study skills; and,
- the amount of time spent on other activities.

Students were asked (Item 33) to nominate the amount of time spent in study, not including lecture, tutorial or practical periods. Table 2 shows the amount of time students estimated they spent in private study. 75% indicated they spent less than twenty hours per week in private study.

Table 2

Amount of Time Spent in Private Study

Time Spent	Number of Students	Percentage	Cumulative Percentage
Less than 5 hours per week	20	8.4	8.4
5 - 8 hours per week	36	15.2	23.6
9 - 12 hours per week	45	19.0	42.6
13 - 16 hours per week	42	17.7	60.3
17 - 20 hours per week	37	15.6	75.9
21 - 24 hours per week	25	10.5	86.4
25 - 28 hours per week	25	6.3	92.7
29 - 32 hours per week	5	2.1	94.8
More than 32 hours per week	7	3.1	97.9
Not recorded	5	2.1	100.0

They were also asked (Item 40) to consider whether or not they had developed efficient techniques for studying. The results shown in Table 3 suggest that more than two thirds of the group were dissatisfied with their personal study skills.

Table 3

Study Skills

Degree of Skill	Number of Students	Percentage
Adequate	67	29.1
Inadequate	88	37.1
Uncertain	80	33.8
TOTAL	235	100.0

Table 4 shows the response to the question:-

In terms of maintaining a balance between study, rest and recreation, how would you rate the time spent in studying?

Table 4

The Relative Time Spent in Study

Time Spent	Number of Students	Percentage
Too little	98	41.6
A Reasonable amount	111	47
Too much	27	11.4
TOTAL	236	100.0

Financial hardship

Five items (Items 9-13) in the questionnaire dealt with the financial status of students.

The responses provided insufficient data to enable inferences to be drawn in respect to students' actual financial status. In the context of this study however, it could be reasoned that it is the perceived financial hardship that contributes to stress rather than actual financial state.

Thus, an attempt was made to obtain students' perceptions of how hard their financial hardship was relative to other students on campus. They were asked (Item 12):-

Do you consider that you experience financial hardship greater than that experienced by other first year students at this College?

A summary of the responses are shown in Table 5.

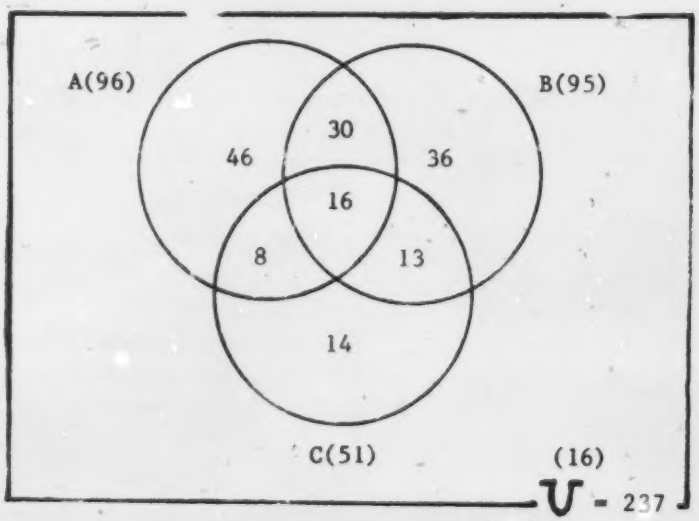
Table 5

Perceived Financial Hardship

Response	Frequency	Percentage
No information	6	2.5
Greater than other students	68	28.7
No greater than other students	109	46.0
Unable to compare	54	22.8
TOTAL	237	100.0

Interpersonal relationships

More than 56% of the students expressed concern in one or more aspects of interpersonal relationships. Three categories of events related to interpersonal relationships (viz. difficulties in staff/peer group relationships at College, trouble in handling personal relationships and frequent family arguments) were examined to determine the extent to which students experiencing difficulties in one of these areas were also experiencing difficulties in the related areas. The results of this analysis are presented in the Venn Diagram that follows.



Of the ninety six students who experienced difficulties at College (A), thirty were also experiencing difficulty in their personal relationships and eight were involved in frequent family arguments. Another sixteen had difficulties in all three of these areas. Ninety five students indicated they had trouble handling a personal relationship (B), while thirty six of these reported it as the sole area of difficulty involving interpersonal relationships. Of the fifty one experiencing frequent family arguments (C), fourteen saw it as the only problem in their interpersonal relationships.

The responses of students who indicated they were worried about their social life were also examined in relation to these other areas of social interaction. (These are not diagrammatically illustrated). It was found that there were only eleven students for whom concern about social life was the only area mentioned related to interpersonal relationships.

Cumulative aspects of stress

Various authors have commented on the cumulative aspects of stress. Table 6 shows the number of recent life events experienced by students during their first year at College.

Table 6

The Number of Recent Life Events

Experienced by Students

Number of Life Events	Number of Students
10	3
9	6
8	5
7	14
6	19
5	31
4	28
3	40
2	42
1	17
0	16
Not recorded	16
TOTAL	237

Almost 20% of the students indicate experiencing six or more recent potentially stressful life events. Table 7 shows the distribution of these 'high stress' students according to sex and age.

Table 7

Distribution of 'High Stress' Students According to Sex and Age

Age	Male	Female	Total
16 - 18	5	13	18
19 - 21	7	7	14
22 - 24	3	2	5
25+	3	6	9
Age not stated	1	-	1
TOTAL	19	28	47

These figures appear to indicate the greater vulnerability of female students in the sixteen to eighteen age range and the twenty five plus age range. However, if one compares the ratio of the sexes within the group used in this investigation with the figures in Table 7, it can be seen that the figures roughly reflect the distribution of the sexes within the larger population.

Table 8

Distribution of Sexes Within the Total Group Surveyed

Age	Male	Female	Total
16 - 18	41	88	129
19 - 21	28	21	49
22 - 24	9	10	19
25+	11	25	36
Age not stated	1	3	4
TOTAL	90	147	237

THE WAYS IN WHICH STUDENT PERCEPTIONS OF THEIR COLLEGE EXPERIENCE AFFECT THEIR GENERAL ATTITUDE TOWARD THE COLLEGE

While stress may be evidenced in the forms of voluntary withdrawal, academic failure and ill health, other more subtle indicators may take the form of underachievement, alienation and poor self esteem.

A 'contextual measure of alienation' (Burbach, 1972), was built into the questionnaire. The items included were those used by Cohen (1974). The instrument included three subscales - powerlessness, meaninglessness and social estrangement - each contributing to an alienation score.

The results in Table 9 show the respondents' scores for each Teaching Department involved in the study. The lower the score the greater the alienation toward the College.

The lowest score was fifteen and the highest forty four. If the median is taken as the cut-off point (the procedure adopted by Dynan, 1978), then all those with scores of thirty or less can be said to be alienated. In the study, the lowest score was seventeen and the highest thirty seven. These scores suggest that between 34.7% and 52.2% of first year students may feel somewhat alien in the College environment. A further analysis of the results was undertaken with a view to exploring a possible association between degree of alienation and the number of recent life events. As this could not be done readily using the computorized information available the analysis was restricted to the respondents' scores from one College department chosen at random. The results indicated there may be a positive relationship between the degree of alienation and the number of recent stressful life events. The cases shown in Table 10 in which the number of recent stressful life events was five or more (N = 9) are used to illustrate.

Table 9

Alienation Scores of 228 First Year College Students (Diploma of Teaching 1979)

Score	Business Education	English	Home Economics	Library Studies	Industrial Arts	Mathematics	Music	Physical Education	Science	Social Science	Communications	Total
15									1			1
16	1											1
18				1				1		1		3
19											1	1
20	1	2	1	1	2					1		8
21	2	1	1	2			2					8
22			1	1			1		1	1	1	6
23	1				1		1			1	1	5
24	1		1		1	1		2	2	1	2	11
25	1	1	2				1	1		4		10
26		3		1	1	2		1			2	10
27	1	1	2		3	1	2	3	1	2		16
28	1	1	2	2	2		2	2	1		1	14
29	2	2	1	1			1		1	1	4	13
30	1	2			1	2	1		5	1		13
31	3	3			2	2	1		2	0	1	14
32	1	1	1	2	1			2	1	1	1	11
33	3		1		2	1	4	1	3	1		16
34		1	1	2	2	1		2	2	1	1	13
35	6	1					1	3	1			12
36				1	3	3	1	1		1	2	12
37								2	2		1	5
38	1					2		2	3	1		8
39					1		1	2	2	1	1	8
40	1		1	1			1					4
41	1											1
42							2		1			3
44						1						1
N =	28	19	15	15	22	16	21	25	29	19	19	228
Mean	30.2	28	27.6	28	29.7	32.5	31	31.5	31.8	28	29	29.95
Mode	35	26/31	25	21	27	36	33	27	30	25	29	27/33
Median	31	28.7	27.2	28	30	32.75	31	33	32	26.75	28.8	30
Range	16-41	20-35	20-40	18-40	20-39	24-44	21-42	18-39	15-42	18-39	19-39	
SD	6.2	4.3	5.3	6.6	5.2	5.3	6.6	5.7	5.8	5.9	5.5	

N.B. The Lower the Score the Greater the Alienation

Table 10

The Relationship between Alienation and Life Events in One Department

Case	Number of Life Events	Alienation Rating
A	6	39
B	5	19
C	7	28
D	9	23
E	10	29
F	8	29
G	7	22
H	6	26
I	7	37

As can be seen only two of these cases had an alienation rating above thirty. The analysis also provided another point of interest. It was found, that where the alienation rating was not uniformly affected by all three subscales, the subscale that influenced the rating most was the measure of powerlessness.

Satisfaction with course

The degree of satisfaction experienced by students was measured in two ways. Students were asked to respond to the question:-

How satisfied are you with your present course of study? (Item 17)

and to rate on a five point scale the statement:-

I find the course I am doing pretty disappointing (Item 70)

The first measure looked at satisfaction in the context of the choice of the course undertaken and the second, at the content and organization of the course. Tables 11 and 12 show the results. The results suggest that between 66% and 80% of the students in their first year may be relatively satisfied with their course.

Table 11

Measure of Satisfaction : Choice of Course

Attitude	Number of Respondents	Percentage
Very satisfied	105	44.3
Somewhat satisfied	87	36.7
Not very satisfied	31	13.1
Not at all satisfied	9	3.8
Not recorded	5	2.1
TOTAL	237	100.0

Table 12

Measure of Satisfaction : Content of Course

Attitude	Number of Respondents	Percentage
Not recorded	10	4.2
Very disappointed	15	6.3
Disappointed	20	8.5
Uncertain	35	14.8
Satisfied	102	43.0
Very satisfied	55	23.2
TOTAL	237	100.0

Commitment to teaching

In this study, commitment was measured by students' rating of the statement:-

I want very much to be a teacher

Table 13 suggests that 68.8% of the students in this survey are strongly committed to teaching.

Table 13

Commitment to Teaching

Attitude	Number of Respondents	Percentage
Not recorded	15	6.3
Strongly not committed	6	2.5
Not committed	5	2.1
Uncertain	48	20.3
Committed	94	39.7
Strongly committed	69	29.1
TOTAL	237	100.0

The correlation co-efficients relating to the variables - satisfaction, commitment and time spent studying were computed. The highest correlation achieved between any two variables was between satisfaction and commitment (R = 0.41).

Achievement

It was hoped data relating to achievement would assist in identifying both the students most vulnerable to stress, and, the nature of the stresses having the most impact on the students' capacity to study.

To this end, students were asked to provide their semester weighted average (S.W.A.) for semester one, 1979. However, a number of major limitations were encountered including a large non-response to the item and therefore the results have not been reported.

Table 14

Recent Life Events of Failing and Non-Failing Students

Number of Life Events	Failing Students		Non-Failing Students		All Students	
	Number	Percentage	Number	Percentage	Number	Percentage
10	2	6.4	1	0.5	3	1.4
9	2	6.4	4	2.1	6	2.7
8	2	6.4	3	1.6	5	2.3
7	8	25.8	6	3.2	14	6.3
6	3	9.7	16	8.4	19	8.6
5	6	19.4	25	13.1	31	14.03
4	2	6.4	26	13.7	28	12.7
3	5	16.1	35	18.4	40	18.1
2	1	3.2	41	21.6	42	19.0
1	0	-	17	8.9	17	7.7
0	0	-	16	8.4	16	7.2
TOTAL	31		190		221	

An item in the recent life events index listed 'failure in course' as one of the events to which students were asked to respond. 14% or thirty one students indicated 'failure in course' was one of their recent life experiences.

An examination of the profiles of these students reveals that 'failure in course' on no occasion was the only source of recent stress, and, only once was it associated with only one other event. These students, generally, were those with more than the average stresses. Table 14 shows the number of stresses recorded by students who experienced 'failure in course' as compared to the total first year population of students involved in the survey.

Twenty four of the thirty one students who had experienced failure in their course had also experienced or were experiencing financial hardship and/or health problems, trouble in a personal relationship, and, concern over their studies.

SELF ESTEEM AND STRESSFUL LIFE EXPERIENCES

Rosenberg's (1964) measure of self worth (Item 72, i-ix Appendix I) was built into the questionnaire developed for this study. For the purposes of this study a score of thirty nine and below was regarded as indicating a person with low self esteem. (All the measures of central tendency lay with the range of 40-44 with a mean of 40, a mode of 44 and a median of 41 points).

On this basis out of the 223 students completing this section of the questionnaire, eighty four students (37.6%) were experiencing low self esteem. A comparison of groups of students according to their major teaching fields, indicates there are clusters of students affected by poor self esteem. (see Table 15).

A comparison of the general profiles of forty students, twenty with high self esteem scores (range 49-55) and twenty with low self esteem* scores (range 24-31) indicates that low self esteem may be associated with higher alienation; a greater number of recent stresses; poor perception of one's

*For the purposes of this comparison the profile with a self esteem score of 8 was excluded because it was incomplete.

Table 15

Self Esteem Scores of 223 First Year College Students (Diploma of Teaching 1979)

Score	Business Education	English	Home Economics	Library Studies	Industrial Arts	Mathematics	Music	Physical Education	Science	Social Science	Communications	Total
Less Than 25	1				1		1	1	1			5
26 - 30	1		2	3	2		1			1	3	13
31 - 35	3	2	1	5		2		1	2	6	3	25
36 - 40	6	2	4	4	2	3	9	6	6	5	5	52
41 - 45	11	11	3	2	11	5	6	12	7	6	7	83
46 - 50	5	2	3	1	6	3	3	5	6	1	1	36
Greater Than 50						3	1		5			9
N =	27	19	13	15	22	16	21	25	27	19	19	223
Mean	40.1	42.4	38	35.9	31.45	43.25	40.05	41.8	43.4	38.1	38.3	40.4
Mode	44	44	36	39	41	44	37	44	39	38	43	44
Median	42	43	38	35	42	44	40	42	43	38	40	41
Range	8-49	33-49	29-48	27-46	25-50	33-54	25-52	24-49	24-55	29-47	28-49	8-55

state of health; and a poorer opinion of one's study skills i.e. a sense of inadequacy.

Conversely, high self esteem appeared to be associated with major teaching field; lower alienation; fewer stresses; better health; and adequate study skills.

Tables 16 - 19 will illustrate these differences.

Table 16

Level of Self Esteem and Alienation

Self Esteem	15-19	20-24	25-29	30-34	35-39	40-44	Total
High			3	6	6	5	20
Low	3	9	5	2	1		20
TOTAL	3	9	8	8	7	5	40

Table 17

Level of Self Esteem and the Number of Recent Life Stresses

Number of Stressful Life Events	Self Esteem	
	Low	High
0	0	1
1	1	3
2	0	6
3	4	4
4	2	0
5	6	1
6	0	4
7	4	1
8	1	0
9	1	0
10	1	0
n =	20	20

Table 18

Level of Self Esteem and Perception of one's State of Health

Health	Self Esteem Low	High
Below Average	3	0
Average	14	7
Above Average	3	13
TOTAL	20	20

Table 19

Level of Self Esteem and Adequacy of Study Skills

Efficient Study Skills	Self Esteem Low	High
Yes	3	14
No	12	2
Uncertain	5	4
TOTAL	20	20

There were no clear trends to relate level of self esteem to age and sex (Table 20)

Table 20

Level of Self Esteem Relative to Age and Sex

	Age	Self Esteem Low	High
M	16-18	4	4
A	19-21	1	5
L	22-24	0	1
E	25+	0	1
F	16-18	9	4
E	19-21	3	2
M	22-24	1	2
A	25+	2	1
L			
E			
TOTAL		20	20

The mean scores for groups identified by their major field studies have been ranked for both self esteem and alienation, and provide an interesting index of vulnerability. These are shown in Table 21.

Table 21

The Ranked Mean Scores for Self Esteem and Alienation by Major Field Studies

Rank	Self Esteem Major Field	$\bar{X}$	Alienation Major Field	$\bar{X}$
1	Science	43.4+	Maths	32.5*
2	Mathematics	43.25	Science	31.8
3	English	42.4	Physical Education	31.5
4	Physical Education	41.8	Music	31
5	Industrial Arts	41.45	Business Education	30.2
6	Business Education	40.1	Industrial Arts	29.7
7	Music	40.05	Communications	29
8	Communications	38.3	English	28
9	Social Science	38.1	Library Studies	28
10	Home Economics	38	Social Science	28
11	Library Studies	35.9++	Home Economics	27.6**

\+ Highest self esteem

++ Lowest self esteem

* Least alienated

** Most alienated

SOME QUALITATIVE RESULTS

The open ended invitation at the end of the questionnaire to 'comment, if you wish, on any aspect of College or personal life that causes you stress' provided opportunity for students to highlight specific areas of concern.

One hundred and two students, that is, 43% of the students surveyed, responded. Some simply restated concerns they had already expressed elsewhere in the questionnaire; some elaborated on the way in which difficulties experienced affected them personally; others introduced matters not raised in the questionnaire.

Four broad themes emerged from the responses:-

- The College environment, including physical facilities, opportunities for social interaction, contact with staff.
- The course undertaken, including workloads, tests, examinations and assignments.
- Personal, including family commitments and self esteem.
- Financial.

The actual distribution of these concerns are summarized in Table 22.

THE COLLEGE ENVIRONMENT

Facilities

The inadequacy of sporting facilities and parking were mentioned by a large number of students. They pointed out there is little access to existing campus facilities for sport to students outside their course requirements. This means that unless physical education is a major, a minor or an elective field of study, students have no opportunity to use these facilities. There were also some undercurrents of resentment against physical education students by other students who perceived 'phys edders' as hogging the facilities.

Table 22

Aspects of College and Personal Life Causing Stress

in One Hundred and Two First Year Students

Source of Stress	Students Groups According to Major Teaching Field												
	Business Education	English	Home Economics	Library Studies	Industrial Arts	Mathematics	Music	Physical & Health Education	Science	Social Science	Communications	Total	Percentage
College Environment	-	4	5	2	5	4	5	17	3	4	4	53	36%
The Course	5	6	2	3	8	3	1	5	2	8	4	47	32%
Personal Problems	3	3	-	5	2	4	3	4	1	3	2	30	20.4%
Financial	-	2	-	4	3	-	1	-	3	4	-	17	11.6%
Number of Problems	8	15	7	14	18	11	10	26	9	19	10	147	100%
Number of Students	7	11	5	10	13	7	8	17	7	10	7	102	
Group Size	30	24	15	16	22	17	21	25	29	19	19	237	
Percentage Response	23%	46%	33%	62%	59%	41%	38%	68%	24%	53%	36%	43%	

There should be use of sporting facilities for all, not just phys.ed. students

We want to use the basketball and badminton

Students also found the lack of parking provision a continuing hassle involving getting to lectures on time and parking fines.

Students whose major field studies are in Physical Education, Home Economics and Mathematics felt the most strongly on these two matters.

Some students also thought the College should provide better music, bookshop and sports shop facilities.

Social interaction

*There's too much isolation in subject area and little interaction between groups (1D5)**

Not enough social activities that combine all years and all departments (1D14)

I feel that the University idea of a lunch break i.e. no one o'clock lectures would be very helpful. Not only would this give lecturers and students a good break and a chance to get together, but it could help overcome the 'large impersonal' view that some people feel (1D8)

This sense of being isolated within one's major teaching field group is widespread among the students who participated in the survey. One student observed that

Even social events that are arranged are biassed towards the units you take (1D7)

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*The symbols in brackets identify the College group from which the comment came.

Contact with staff

A number of first year students felt threatened by their own interpretations of the attitudes of College staff toward students.

> *College should treat students as adults not as school children (1D8)*

> *There is a certain feeling projected which is of distrust and incompetence of students (1D7)*

> *I don't like the way all of the _____ lecturers treat their students like dirt (1D10)*

> *Some lecturers think that students are totally inferior and treat them more like four year olds (1D12)*

> *Attitudes of some lecturers toward school leaver College students is not very friendly or cooperative at times. Some don't even know you're doing the course (1D13)*

THE COURSE

Evidence presented earlier suggested that the students generally regarded the course as satisfying. However, there were aspects which caused stress for some students.

Workloads

The following were typical remarks.

> *All the work comes at one time. There seems to be no communication between lecturers in different areas (1D3)*

> *Work this semester seems to be extremely hectic, especially since returning from teaching practice and having major assignments and tutorials all due within a very short space of time. Would there be any chance of having teaching practice earlier e.g. second term at school? (1D7)*

> *Standards as required by lecturers/tutors seem much higher than in other departments (1D8)*

Information is thrown up too quickly and too intensively (1D9)

The courses are rushed (1D11)

More work than can be physically accomplished (1D13)

Too much extracurricula activity outside normal hours (1D14)

Tests, Examinations and Assignments

I feel that lecturers should space work out evenly through the semester so that when exams come round you haven't got major assignments to complete in just about every unit (1D8)

Assignments and exams all mount up at the end of semester and my friends from outside College can't seem to understand that I can't go out so much now (1D9)

Assignments are all due at the same time (1D11)

Aspects of the unit not covered one or two weeks before exams. Need time to revise the semester's work, not learn new facts in the week before exams (1D7)

All assignments come near exam time (1D2)

STUDENTS WITH MORE PERSONAL CONCERNS

Personal and financial situations causing stress figured prominently in the survey of patterns of stress. Mention has been made of the need to establish one's sense of identity and achieve satisfying personal relationships. Responses to the open question on specific areas creating stress provide some additional insights into problem areas. Both male and female students with dependents - spouse or children - and a home life to maintain experienced considerable strain in coping with study, work and family commitments.

As one student said

> *Having to work three nights a week and weekends to provide for my family and self and study as well is one big hassle (1D3)*

Other students touched on more introspective themes.

> *My own shyness causes me most stress*

> *Finding direction. What _____ do I really want to make me happy? I like my course and lots of other things but something is missing*

> *I find I get easily depressed when I've been sick and force myself to do six assignments for one week on time and then half the others ask for extensions and get them*

> *Peer group tends to drive me crazy! Too much crap about the social set up. People aren't people anymore - only what they're trying to impress on others*

> *Personal relationships*

Some students found travelling to and from College a stressful experience. One student reported that up to three hours a day was spent travelling between College and home. Some students from country areas found being so far away from home distressing.

FINANCIAL HARDSHIP

59% of the students involved in this survey indicated they experienced financial hardship. Nearly 29% thought they experienced hardship greater than that experienced by most other first year students.

Almost 12% of the students making additional comments again referred to their financial state. Their comments reflect something of what it means to experience financial hardship.

No financial assistance from Government and I would study better if living with other students but cannot afford it (1D13)

Although I get T.E.A.S. it's not enough (1D13)

No money causes me much stress (1D7)

It's hard trying to buy books with no money (1D12)

But perhaps the effects of financial hardship are best summed up by the student who said

Things tend to get on top of you at times - but more so when you have financial problems (1D8)

DISCUSSION

The study attempts to identify some of the pressures on students in their first year at College that are related to the College experience while at the same time acknowledging the interaction of personal experiences not attributable to the College experience.

The information gleaned by way of questionnaire provides a profile of students:-

- their study behaviour;
- the recent life experiences that have touched them; and,
- the way they felt about various aspects of their College experience

toward the end of their first year as tertiary students.

These perceptions, in turn, may help pinpoint areas where adaptation for whatever reason - the individual's lack of coping skills, or his inability to control or manipulate them, the structure of the environment : its alternatives and support - is inadequate.

In has been suggested (Gunn, 1970; Lokitz and Sprandel, 1976) that many students coming to College direct from school are facing developmental crises points in which being able to establish a sense of personal identity and achieving satisfying personal relationships are of major importance. While this may be so, there is also need to acknowledge the continuing biographical crises that accompany an individual throughout life. These so-called developmental crises may not cease at some mathematical point called 'adulthood'.

The questionnaire data indicate there are many students in this College who have recently experienced considerable major life change. Those, for example, whose personal values and expectations do not enable them to fit comfortably within the College norms; those who have previously been employed in the full-time work force or at home; and, those who have experienced changes in their social or marital status. Perhaps there is need to recognize culture shock as a major fact of life at College. If the temporary status of students has built into it such items as financial dependence, change in social position and the teacher/pupil model of school days, the individual's self esteem is under constant threat during the period of transitional status. It is not surprising therefore that students display extreme sensitivity in situations that bear the marks of other situations they experienced as children.

Seen in this context remarks such as

> *College should treat students as adults not as school children*

reflects that previous experience most closely resembling the College experience is that of being a student in school and as such has the power to restimulate any negative feelings associated with the earlier situation.

In the same way alienation scores, self esteem measures and listed grievances, attributed to students identified by their major field of studies should not be interpreted as proof of fault in staff members attached to the respective departments. A comment such as

> *I find the course pretty disappointing*

tells as much about the disappointed individual as it does about the disappointing course. Similarly, statements like

I find him unapproachable

reflect a feeling rather than a fact.

Regardless of whether one can objectively measure a person as being approachable/non approachable leaves the source of the problem with the student experiencing that feeling. The solution begins with the feeling. In both these contexts one needs to know more about the individual's motivations, expectations and self esteem.

The College experience is intended to provide opportunity for students to feel significant and to contribute to the communal life of the College. The extent to which it does so should be reflected in changes in student attitudes as the students themselves become a part of 'the College'.

Lokitz and Sprandel (1976) noted 'not only do students seek validation of their existence from friends, they also need and seek validation of their existence from adults in their new community. Impersonal lecturers and advisers who do not have time to spend with students are perceived by some students on a personal level i.e. *If I mattered he would notice me.*'

Some student comments in this survey reflect this feeling

I feel that College staff are so hard to find (1D12)

They're so impersonal compared to other College staff (1D10)

As students grow in self confidence they begin to realize that the attitudes of the College staff members are not necessarily a reflection of their worth as persons. However, if students become disillusioned with peers and with their lecturers their own feelings of worth may be threatened.

It was at such a point in the study quoted (Lokitz and Sprandel, 1976) that some students in that study are reported to have as a matter of self preservation either projected the cause of all problems outside themselves and focussed it on the University or they directed their discouragement inward and became very depressed, withdrawing from academic and social encounters.

Students who withdrew from their course

To compare the stresses of students who had experienced failure but were still attending College with those of students who voluntarily withdrew from their course, a search was made of the files of students who, in their first year of Diploma of teaching voluntarily withdrew between March and August, 1979. There were thirty two such students - twenty three female and nine male. Reasons given for withdrawal may be grouped as:-

1. Financial, including 'offered employment', 'workload of employment too heavy'.
2. Motivational, including 'wanted break from study', 'other studies too heavy', 'uncertian job prospects', 'found course disappointing'.
3. Personal/family/domestic problems.
4. Health problems.

The relative emphasis of concerns affecting withdrawal of students in their first year of College are shown in Table 23. Nine students gave more than one reason for withdrawal. It was also interesting to note that 'financial problems' and 'family/domestic problems' were rarely nominated as a sole reason for withdrawal.

Table 23

Reasons given for Students Withdrawal from First Year of Course (N = 32)

Reason	Number of Students		
	Male	Female	Total
Financial	5	8	13
Motivational	4	7	11
Personal/Family/Domestic	2	12	14
Health	1	4	5

These figures support the common sense view that stress is cumulative but further investigation would be needed to find out the differential effects of long term and short term stresses, and those within/outside the control of the individual. There seems to be little in terms of stress factors to distinguish the students who withdrew from College and those who remained and were the subjects of this investigation.

Some Implications of Isolation for Nedlands College

Mechanic (1978) suggests that physical isolation is likely to produce a shared belief structure within a group that is subjected to little validation from students in other groups.

In view of the sense of 'isolation in subject areas' already expressed by students in the present survey some of the implications of such isolation for this institution should be explored.

(Reference here will not be made to isolation at the broader levels of Nedlands College being the only one of its kind in Western Australia and of Western Australia's own isolation).

Each department has its own distinctive culture which the student must at least, in part acquire. Particular values are maintained, specific interests pursued. Persistent and overall systems of assumptions and opinions may characterize a department.

Students are exposed to a socialization process through their physical location within the College, the particular 'status' of their discipline, their patterns and opportunities for communication with other students and their association with 'old' students. These determine what aspects of the culture they acquire and the rapidity with which they learn them.

Some students from several departments challenged the qualifications, ability and competence of specific staff members. Such challenges may well be regarded as one of a student's coping strategies. By treating situations in which one is not comfortable as occurring independently of one's own behaviour the student can shift responsibility from self and 'significant' (valued) other to external factors - and certain staff members are likely to become visible pillars for attack. For example, staff teaching in areas the student finds difficult or is not interested in, or who do not conform to the lecturer's 'role' within a particular department.

A student, however, will maintain these views only as long as he receives support from others.

Course related issues for particular groups

The College experience may foster stresses in particular student groups. The nature of the course itself puts some students in a peculiar situation in relation to course requirements, teaching expectation and the status of their teaching field in schools.

The workload problem featured strongly in three departments - Industrial Arts, Social Science and Communication Studies. Specific areas of difficulty frequently mentioned both in this survey and through the Counselling Services both in 1979 and 1980 are aspects of the graphics units in Industrial Arts, geography in Social Science and theatre work in Communication Studies. Students who have proceeded to the next year level i.e. second year students in 1980, in their major field with units of graphics or drama have continued to find these heavy. It may be relevant here to record that there have been a number of serious health problems (including three cases of glandular fever) among second year Communication Studies students in 1980 and to draw attention to recent medical research that cites glandular fever as a stress related condition.

Where students are involved in Social Science and Communication Studies as minor field studies the workload in the areas already specified still emerge as ones causing concern among students.

It should be noted that minor field studies for Social Science rotate geography, history and economics on a yearly basis. In 1979 (the year in which data was collected for this study) first year students enrolled in Social Science minor field studies took geography. In 1980 first year students enrolled in Social Science minor field studies are taking history. In their first year of tertiary studies many students experienced difficulty with the geography unit. No such difficulty has been expressed by students undertaking the same geography unit in the second or third year of their programme.

Students whose field is Library Studies are required to do more work involving their second teaching area than other groups are required to do in their second teaching areas. In addition, their practicum work is orientated toward their second area. Similarly, students in Communication Studies take a heavier course load. They are required to take English major field studies as their second teaching area.

A College survey reported elsewhere* suggests there may be special stresses for some students involved in teaching fields not represented in the primary school curriculum e.g. Business Education, Home Economics and Industrial Arts. In these areas students may experience less teaching practice relevant to their teaching fields and may not have completed secondary level studies in related subjects.

The status in which a teaching field is held within the school system itself may also have subtle effects on the staff and students attached to the related departments within this College. Historically, school classes in subject areas covered by units included in the course work of the Business Education, Home Economics, Industrial Arts and Art departments have been regarded as non academic. It has been suggested that teachers in these areas may have less access to promotional positions (possibly in part because they have not always been required to have full professional qualifications). They also are likely to have a larger number of class groups, a greater diversity of actual subjects taught e.g. technical drawing, wood work, metalwork, plastics for Industrial Arts or typing, book-keeping, commerce, business english, accounting for teachers of Business Education; and, a greater involvement with school students of lower ability. In many instances more able students are directed into other areas.

Such factors as these may well put pressures on these College departments to prove themselves as respectable disciplines of learning.

A sociological aspect that warrants attention is the age and sex composition within certain departments. Social isolation featured strongly in comments made by students associated with Home Economics, Library Studies, Business Education and Industrial Arts.

Programming Constraints

The problems relating to the distribution of the workload throughout the programme are exacerbated by more general programming constraints within the academic year. Although the courses are organised around a semester system each semester includes a practicum programme and the retention of a two week vacation period that coincides with the school vacations

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*Teaching Practice, Supervision, Advice and Assessment : Report Number 12, May 1980, p47.

provided by the state education system. For students of this College the first and second years of their programmes provide only two periods in the year in which a class programme of more than five weeks can proceed without interruption.

The distribution of the student's workload is further complicated through a combination of continuous assessment and examination procedures, including periodic tests.

Concern over studies

Concern over studies would seem to reflect the nature of the student role itself.

Perry (according to Mason 1980) 'found that students varied in the degree of simplicity or complexity of their view of knowledge, and consequently of their approach to learning'.

The thinking of students in the early stages of tertiary studies tended toward a dualism 'characterised by rigidity, dependence on authorities for 'right answers', and an inability to accept the legitimacy of viewpoints, lifestyles and values at variance with their own. At later stages (relativism), students recognized knowledge and values as relative, and gradually became more flexible in their thinking and open to new perspectives. At the highest stages (commitment), students were aware of the need to take responsibility for this. Perry found that students progressed along the scheme towards greater maturity as they progressed through College'.

What is suggested here is that new students entering tertiary institutions whether they are school leavers, mature age students or graduates entering new disciplines are likely to, at least initially, exhibit a heavy reliance on 'authority' and a concern with 'right answers'.

Student desire to establish academic competence is indicated in this study as is the belief that studying should take precedence over all else. Several factors contribute to this concern - previous competence, employment goals and the ambiguity of their current situation.

The majority of students are bright individuals who have achieved well in high school and expect to do comparable work in College. It comes as a shock to many that they now appear less able than at any previous point in their lives.

Students perceive high grades as the means of securing a teaching appointment at the end of their course. The way to achieve high grades in the past has been in being able to produce the right answer. Now, for the first time, students are often dealing with material where 'right' answers may not exist.

Added to this is the fact that many students have not yet learned to manage their time effectively and tend to become overwhelmed by the multiple responsibilities facing them. The realization of the scope of the College experience produces symptoms of a shock reaction.

In some ways the expressed concern over studies is inconsistent with the evidence available (Table 2 page 5). The amount of time spent in private study seems surprisingly low in objective terms. There may be need to query what was and was not measured. For example, does the time spent in private study include preparation of written assignments? If one was to judge from some of the comments made by and the behaviour observed of students when assignments are imminently due it may be that the periods of time in which students find themselves totally consumed by assignment preparation are not readily amenable to measurement of a per week basis. Perhaps more information is needed on the extent to which students do actually organize their study load.

Financial hardship

As has been stated, the traditional student condition would seem to be that of having no money. Although 59% of the students surveyed indicated that they had experienced financial hardship it is difficult to determine what, in situational terms, financial hardship is. For some students, however, it seems as much a measure of the extent of their independence, or freedom, from parents and parental control as an actual amount of cash in hand. In such cases, this is an additional symptom of the suspended status they hold as students.

For other students, financial hardship has meant being housed in poor living conditions, having inadequate food and clothing for self and dependents along with the attendent risk to health and recurring minor illnesses. In at least five cases the stress of needing to pass the course led to students attempting too much study and falling into severe depression. Where part-time work ceased to be available some students reached despair and withdrew prematurely from their courses.

SOME CONCLUSIONS

During their first year at College some students become overwhelmed by the multiple responsibilities facing them. They have great difficulty in organising their lives to allocate time and give their attention to a variety of commitments - academic, social and personal. Some students are ambivalent in their needs to be seen as 'adult' and independent on the one hand and to be helped, noticed and understood on the other.

The evidence suggests that academic performance is the first major concern of students when they enter the College. However, the College experience requires most students to redefine themselves socially as well as academically. Thus, once their academic status is established there is likely to be a move by many students toward establishing their personal social life.

During their first year at College the nucleus of the students social world consists of the staff members and peer group associated with their major field studies. As students 'move in' to College, emotionally they become more interested in the campus as a community and seek involvement in both College and social issues. Many students are concerned about the constraints imposed by the College timetable, the nature of their course work and the recreational facilities available which function to keep students locked into year groups within separate departments.

College staff could assist first year students to become an integral part of the College by actively reaching out to them. The information provided in this study may enable the College to adopt strategies that will be effective in meeting students' needs before they reach a crucial stage.

Much of the foregoing discussion lends support to a developmental approach to adjustment to College life. The impact of cognitive development theories in primary and secondary education has been considerable, the most notable application being those derived from Piagetian theory. However, little attention has been given to any notion of stages of development at tertiary level. The cognitive development scheme developed in the United States by William Perry may be pertinent at this point.

The scheme calls for a model of instruction that provides a series of challenges to students' current belief systems while providing sufficient supports to ensure that development is not overwhelming.

If College staff are able to take account of 'where students are' and recognize the rigid dichotomous thinking of many tertiary students, they may be able to loosen student attitudes by manipulating the degree of structure, the range of learning tasks, the amount of direct experience and providing a sense of community support for the individual.

In practical terms, College lecturers may be able to contribute to the welfare of students in their first year at College by:-

1. Assisting students, especially during their first semester at College to develop skills in planning their work e.g. by ensuring that due dates for assignments and tests are staggered in such a way as to prevent students in the early stages of their course accumulating tasks to be done.
2. Providing students with:-
   (a) specific information on what is expected in terms of standards and requirements e.g. estimated length of written items, anticipated time needed to complete the set task, number of books or articles regarded sufficient as reference material;
   (b) practice samples for preparing outlines, summaries and essays appropriate to the discipline; and,
   (c) early 'feedback' that enables them to establish their academic status e.g. short assignments or worksheets, discussion group participation to provide opportunity for immediate feedback to students. Once they know 'where they stand' some students could be freed from the 'status battle' to devote their energies to their College course.
3. Promoting students' personal development in both individual and group situations.

In addition, College Policy makers may be able to:-

1. Overcome some of the isolation within major teaching groups by:-
   (a) fostering opportunities for contact between students from different groups;
   (b) providing 'common' free time;
   (c) arranging that established subject groups are scattered for some units e.g. education, communications and general studies.
2. Achieve some re-distribution of workloads by rationalizing the organization of courses/units of work, the College year, and the use and frequency of assessment procedures.

College staff might also consider some of the issues pertinent to particular groups with a view to making adjustments to reduce problems identified.

On apparent 'no solution' areas such as parking and sporting facilities where space available precludes solutions involving expansion, students' stress in these areas may be reduced simply by being taken into the confidence of the administrators and invited to express their views and create some alternatives.

A FINAL COMMENT

To test student stress in terms of an adaptation model, we should be measuring the degree of change on such scales as self esteem and alienation over time e.g. most of the students used in this study will enter third year Diploma of Teaching in 1981.

Perhaps attention to the task at hand i.e. study, is maintained by the level of self esteem. This being so, maintaining student self esteem is a problem to which the College could address itself.

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APPENDIX 1

NEDLANDS COLLEGE OF ADVANCED EDUCATION

RESEARCH PROJECT : Patterns of Student Stress

TO ALL FIRST YEAR STUDENTS (DIPLOMA OF TEACHING)

You are invited to participate in a research project sponsored by this College to study the nature and impact of stress on students at tertiary level.

This questionaire seeks information relating to selective aspects of students personal backgrounds.

1. All information provided will remain confidential between you and the Special Projects Officer. (That is, findings will be presented in collective form and a particular individuals response will not be identified). The original questionnaire will be destroyed once the information required has been extracted.

2. You are not required to put your name on the questionnaire.

3. Questions are not compulsory. If there is a question which you feel uncomfortable about answering, leave it unanswered.

4. You are welcome to follow up this questionnaire by approaching the Special Projects Officer with questions and/or suggestions regarding the research project. (Room S1)

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Where appropriate indicate your answers to the following items by marking the boxes provided.

1. GROUP (eg ID 13) _____ 2. SEX : 1. MALE ☐ 2. FEMALE ☐

3. AGE _____ 4. YEAR OF BIRTH _____

5. PLACE OF BIRTH _____ (COUNTRY)

6. FIRST LANGUAGE :
   1. ENGLISH
   2. OTHER

7. CIVIL STATE :
   1. NEVER BEEN MARRIED
   2. MARRIED
   3. WIDOWED
   4. DIVORCED OR SEPARATED

8. DEPENDENTS :
   1. NO DEPENDENTS
   2. SPOUSE
   3. CHILDREN
   4. AGED PARENT/S
   5. OTHER

FINANCIAL STATE

9. Are you financially dependent upon your parents?
   1. WHOLLY
   2. PARTIALLY
   3. NOT AT ALL

10. If not wholly dependent upon your parents, are you in receipt of outside financial assistance?
   1. YES
   2. NO

If YES, answer item 11 (a), 11 (b) and 11(c); if NO proceed to item 12 on the next page.

11. (a) What is the nature of assistance received?
   1. TERTIARY ALLOWANCE
   2. PENSION
   3. OTHER (please specify) _____

(b) What is the extent of assistance received?
   1. FULL BENEFIT/ALLOWANCE
   2. PARTIAL BENEFIT/ALLOWANCE

(c) If you are in receipt of a Tertiary Allowance on what rate are you being paid?
   1. AS AN INDEPENDENT STUDENT
   2. AS AN ORDINARY STUDENT LIVING AWAY FROM HOME
   3. AS AN ORDINARY STUDENT LIVING AT HOME.

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12. Do you consider that you experience financial hardship greater than that experienced by other 1st year students at this College?

1. YES
2. NO
3. DON'T KNOW

14

13. EMPLOYMENT :
1. NOT EMPLOYED
2. EMPLOYED FULL TIME
3. EMPLOYED PART-TIME
4. EMPLOYED CASUALLY

(Please specify number of hours per week employed). ____

15

14. CHOICE OF TERTIARY INSTITUTION/COURSE

Nedlands College was
1. 1st Choice of institution
2. 2nd " "
3. 3rd " "
4. 4th " "

16

15. What is your major teaching field? _____

This field was your
1. 1st Choice
2. 2nd Choice
3. 3rd Choice

17

18

16. What is your minor (or 2nd major) teaching field? _____

This field was your
1. 1st Choice
2. 2nd Choice
3. 3rd Choice
4. The only one available

19

20

17. How satisfied/dissatisfied are you with your present course of study?

1. Very satisfied
2. Somewhat satisfied
3. Not very satisfied
4. Not at all satisfied.

21

18. Have you previously been enrolled at a College of Advanced Education, University or Teachers' College.

1. YES
2. NO

22

If yes, are you enrolling

1. After previous withdrawal from a course.
2. After deferring a course.
3. After failing a course.
4. After a change of course.
5. In a new course.

23

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ACCOMMODATION

19 (A) Type of accommodation during term

1. AT HOME
2. WITH RELATIVES
3. IN LODGINGS
4. BOARDING WITH A FAMILY
5. IN RESIDENTIAL COLLEGE
6. IN A FLAT
7. OTHER ACCOMODATION Please specify

☐ 24

19 (B) Do you live alone?

1. YES
2. NO

☐ 25

20 (A) Type of accomodation during vacation.

1. AT HOME
2. WITH RELATIVES
3. IN LODGINGS
4. BOARDING WITH A FAMILY
5. IN RESIDENTIAL COLLEGE
6. IN A FLAT
7. OTHER ACCOMMODATION Please specify

☐ 26

21. Is your home with your parents?

1. BOTH PARENTS
2. ONE PARENT
3. NEITHER PARENT

☐ 27

TYPE OF SCHOOL ATTENDED

22. What was the last school you attended before coming to College?

1. A SENIOR HIGH SCHOOL
2. A HIGH SCHOOL
3. A DISTRICT HIGH SCHOOL
4. A TECHNICAL SCHOOL
5. A CORRESPONDENCE SCHOOL
6. OTHER

☐ 28

23. How was this school administered?

1. BY THE GOVERNMENT
2. BY A CHURCH BODY
3. BY AN INDEPENDENT BODY

☐ 29

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24. What was the nature of enrolments?

1. SINGLE SEX
2. CO-EDUCATIONAL

30

25. How did you attend this school?

1. AS A DAY STUDENT
2. AS A WEEKLY BOARDER
3. AS A BOARDER

31

SOCIAL HABITS

26. RELIGION

1. CHRISTIAN
2. HEBREW
3. HINDU
4. MOSLEM
5. OTHER Please specify_____
6. NO RELIGION

32

27. How often do you attend a church/synagogue or other meeting place?

1. FREQUENTL
2. OCCASIONALLY
3. NOT AT ALL

33

28. Are you an active member of a religious/meditation group?

1. YES
2. NO

34

29. Do you participate in any clubs or informal groups?

1. YES
2. NO

35

30. Do you play in any sporting teams regularly?

1. YES
2. NO

36

31. Have you any special interests or hobbies?

1. YES
2. NO

37

32. Do you take regular physical exercise (i.e. swimming, walking, squash, golf,

1. YES
2. NO

38

STUDY HABITS

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33. Time per week spent studying (do not include lecture, tutorial practical periods, etc).

1. LESS THAN 5 HOURS PER WEEK ☐
2. 5-8 HOURS PER WEEK ☐
3. 9-12 HOURS PER WEEK ☐
4. 13-16 HOURS PER WEEK ☐
5. 17-20 HOURS PER WEEK ☐
6. 21-24 HOURS PER WEEK ☐
7. 25-28 HOURS PER WEEK ☐
8. 29-32 HOURS PER WEEK ☐
9. MORE THAN 32 HOURS PER WEEK ☐

☐ 39

34. Length of time usually spent in a period of studying.

1. 0-30 MINS ☐
2. 31-60 MINS ☐
3. 61-90 MINS ☐
4. 91-120 MINS ☐
5. 121 + MINS ☐ Please specify_____
6. NO PATTERN ☐

☐ 40

35. During a period set aside for study, do you have any breaks?

1. REGULAR SHORT BREAKS ☐
2. NO BREAKS ☐
3. OTHER ☐ Please specify_____

☐ 41

36. Do you study according to a regular study timetable?

1. YES ☐
2. MOSTLY ☐
3. NO ☐

☐ 42

37. How would you describe your personal style in relation to studying?

1. IMPULSIVE ☐
2. REGULAR ☐
3. COMPULSIVE ☐

☐ 43

38. On which of the following days do you study better?

1. DAYS WITH HEAVY CLASS CONTACT ☐
2. DAYS WITH LIGHT CLASS CONTACT ☐
3. DAYS WITH NO CLASS CONTACT ☐
4. NO DIFFERENCE ☐

☐ 44

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39. How much difficulty do you experience in getting assignments, tutorial papers etc. handed in by the required date? ☐ 45

1. NO DIFFICULTY
2. SOME DIFFICULTY
3. GREAT DIFFICULTY

40. Do you consider you have developed efficient techniques for studying? ☐ 46

1. YES
2. NO
3. UNCERTAIN

41. In terms of maintaining a balance between study, rest and recreation. How would you rate the time you spend in studying? ☐ 47

1. TOO LITTLE TIME
2. TOO MUCH TIME
3. A REASONABLE AMOUNT OF TIME

42. Do you study better at home or at College? ☐ 48

1. AT HOME
2. AT COLLEGE
3. ELSEWHERE Please specify_____
4. NO DIFFERENCE

PREVIOUS AND PRESENT HEALTH

43. How do you regard your present state of health? ☐ 49

1. BELOW AVERAGE
2. AVERAGE
3. ABOVE AVERAGE

44. How many times did you consult a doctor (on your own behalf) during the 12 months prior to coming to College? ☐ 50

1. NOT AT ALL.
2. 1 - 3 TIMES.
3. 4 - 9 TIMES.
4. 10 OR MORE TIMES

45. Are there any questions with regard to your own health, your family history, your personal habits you would like to discuss with a doctor or medically qualified person? ☐ 51

1. YES
2. NO

COMPUTER CODE ONLY

46. How would you describe your diet/eating habits?

1. AN ORDINARY DIET
2. A VEGETARIAN DIET
3. A SPECIAL DIET
4. OTHER Please specify _____ 52

47. Have your eating habits changed since you commenced College?

1. YES
2. NO 53

If yes, in what way/s have they changed?

1. THE AMOUNT EATEN IS MORE
2. THE AMOUNT EATEN IS LESS 54
3. EATING IS MORE FREQUENT
4. EATING IS LESS FREQUENT
5. THE TIMES OF EATING HAVE CHANGED 55
6. OTHER
(Please specify) _____

48. Do you drink more tea/coffee than previously?

1. YES
2. NO 56

49. How often do you drink alcoholic drinks?

1. ONCE A WEEK OR MORE OFTEN
2. OCCASIONALLY 57
3. NEVER

50. How often do you smoke cigarettes?

1. MORE THAN 15 CIGARETTES A DAY
2. 1-14 CIGARETTES A DAY 58
3. NEVER

51. Do you smoke a pipe/cigars?

1. YES
2. NO 59

52. Are you taking some form of medication (for pain, allergy, treatment of a long term condition) regularly at present?

1. YES
2. NO

53. Do you think you get sufficient sleep? 60

1. MORE THAN NEEDED
2. THE AMOUNT NEEDED
3. LESS THAN NEEDED

...8

INFORMATION ABOUT PARENTS/FAMILY

COMPUTER CODE ONLY

54. Are your parents still living?

(A) Mother still living
1. YES
2. NO

(B) Father still living
1. YES
2. NO

61 62

55. Age of parents still living.

(A) MOTHER		(B) FATHER	
1.	Under 40	1.	Under 40
2.	40-44	2.	40-44
3.	45-49	3.	45-49
4.	50-54	4.	50-54
5.	55-59	5.	55-59
6.	60-64	6.	60-64
7.	65-69	7.	65-69
8.	70 & Over	8.	70 & Over

63 64

56. Did your mother graduate from a University or Teachers' College?
1. YES
2. NO

65

57. Did your father graduate from a University or Teachers' College?
1. YES
2. NO

66

58. Number of children in your family including yourself.
1. 1 CHILD
2. 2 CHILDREN
3. 3 CHILDREN
4. 4 CHILDREN
5. 5 CHILDREN
6. 6 CHILDREN
7. 7 CHILDREN
8. 8 OR MORE CHILDREN

67

59. Your position in the family.
1. ONLY CHILD
2. 1st CHILD
3. 2nd CHILD
4. 3rd CHILD
5. 4th CHILD
6. 5th CHILD
7. 6th CHILD
8. 7th CHILD
9. 8th OR LATER CHILD

68

9...

60. Do you have siblings who are past or present students of a University or Teachers' College?

COMPUTER CODE ONLY

1. YES ☐
2. NO ☐

68

PERSONAL EXPERIENCE OF COLLEGE

Put a circle round a number against each of the following statements to indicate YOUR OPINION about College.

1. Strongly
2. Agree
3. Uncertain
4. Disagree
5. Strongly disagree

61.	I can't make much sense out of what happens at this College	1	2	3	4	5	70
62.	I feel I really am part of this College community	1	2	3	4	5	71
63.	More and more I feel helpless in the face of what is happening at this College	1	2	3	4	5	72
64.	The size and complexity of this College make it very difficult for a student to know where to get help or advice	1	2	3	4	5	73
65.	A student has little chance of protecting his personal interests when they conflict with those of this College	1	2	3	4	5	74
66.	I seldom feel 'lost' or 'alone' at this College	1	2	3	4	5	75
67.	Life at this College is so confusing at times that a student really doesn't know where to turn	1	2	3	4	5	76
68.	It's wishful thinking to believe that a student can influence what happens at this College	1	2	3	4	5	77
69.	This College is just too big to really look after each individual student	1	2	3	4	5	78
70.	I find the course I am doing pretty disappointing	1	2	3	4	5	79

...10

INFORMATION ABOUT YOURSELF

COMPUT CODE ONL

71. Indicate which, if any, of the following life experiences you have personally encountered over the last twelve months.

1.	DIFFICULTIES IN INTERACTION WITH A MEMBER OF STAFF/PEER GROUP AT COLLEGE	☐
2.	TROUBLE IN HANDLING A PERSONAL RELATIONSHIP	☐
3.	FAILURE IN YOUR COURSE	☐
4.	HEALTH PROBLEMS WITHIN YOURSELF	☐
5.	HEALTH PROBLEMS WITHIN YOUR FAMILY	☐
6.	LOSS OF EMPLOYMENT	☐
7.	FINANCIAL HARDSHIP	☐
8.	LOSS OF OR SEPARATION FROM SOMEONE CLOSE TO YOU	☐
9.	FREQUENT FAMILY ARGUMENTS	☐
10.	CONCERN OVER YOUR STUDIES	☐
11.	WORRY ABOUT YOUR SOCIAL LIFE	☐
12.	OTHER (PLEASE SPECIFY) _____	☐
13.	NONE OF THESE THINGS	☐

72. Put a circle around a number against each of the following statements to indicate how you feel about yourself.

1. Strongly agree
2. Agree
3. Uncertain
4. Disagree
5. Strongly disagree

i.	I feel that I'm a person of worth, at least on an equal plane with others	1	2	3	4	5
ii.	All in all, I am inclined to feel that I'm a failure	1	2	3	4	5
iii.	I feel that I have a number of good qualities	1	2	3	4	5
iv.	I am able to do things as well as most other people	1	2	3	4	5
v.	I feel I do not have much to be proud of	1	2	3	4	5
vi.	I take a positive attitude towards myself	1	2	3	4	5
vii.	On the whole, I am satisfied with myself	1	2	3	4	5
viii.	I wish I could have more respect for myself	1	2	3	4	5
ix.	I certainly feel useless at times	1	2	3	4	5
x.	At times I think I am no good at all	1	2	3	4	5
xi.	I get on very well with other people	1	2	3	4	5
xii.	I want very much to be a teacher	1	2	3	4	5

73. What was your Semester Weighted Average (SWA) for last semester

74. If you wish, comment on any aspect of College or personal life that causes you stress.